

Oct 16, 2024 | Town Council Study Committee Meeting Minutes

Location: 131 Pleasant Street (Room A)

Attendees: Beau Barber, Curtis Barnes, Caroline Baltzer, Jeremy Bloomer, Jeff Carlson, Thomas Dixon, Joe Grause, Rachel Mandle, Jill Vieth, Donna Martino, Kelly Steffen

Action items

- ☐ Decide on the number of Town Councilors and their compensation.
 - ☐ Is there adequate funding from Collins Center?
- ☐ When can a "Sense of the Meeting" vote occur during Town Meeting?
- ☐ Does the TCSC have adequate funds on the Collins Center contract to finish the draft Charters?

Notes

(0:00) Call to Order by Chair Joe Grause

(1:30) Approval of October 2nd minutes by majority voice vote.

(3:30) Caroline suggests having public forum meetings more frequently. Group concludes holidays present challenges to meeting too frequently and the Committee should wait until it has completed more work on the Charter.

Jeremy and Kelly comment on using other vehicles for information to supplement possible future public forum meetings.

(12:30) Group to break up frequently heard questions and create a FAQ sheet for publication.

(15:35) Curtis emphasizes promoting TCSC email account to gather and respond to public input.

(17:30) Rachel asks if the Committee has decided if the (tentative) nine Council seats were "at-large" or if there were "District" seats too.

(17:53) Joe thought the Committee had "mostly" decided on nine seats and "at-large".

(26:30) Group supports "at-large" for all seats. Refer to FAQ sheet for more info.

(28:45) Joe follows up on Tom's comment about the potential number of Council seats.

Committee not concerned a Town Council would struggle to attract candidates, especially with compensation. It thinks nine creates a more diverse group and dilutes power, especially from potential special interests. Committee also thinks it enables a larger pool of labor and skills.

Compensation should be an incentivizing factor.

(35:00) Jill: Can we have the number be adjustable?

(54:18) Joe: Why did the Committee not choose the Mayor-Council? Refer to FAQ sheet for more info.

(57:30 Tom: Advises getting Collins Center feedback on the best answer to why the group does not favor a Mayor-Council form of government.

(01:04) Joe: Asks about answering and editing potential FAQ questions and how the group can do it remotely.

(01:05) Jeff to assemble FAQ questions and notes and circulate to group.

(01:06) Joe: Is current meeting schedule okay? Group does not raise any scheduling issues

(01:06:20) Joe introduces there are limited funds for Collins Center consulting. Curtis asks if there are enough funds for Collins to prepare a charter for review by KP Law.

(01:10) Donna asks if it's possible to increase awareness and, in turn, attendance at possible future public forums. Group consensus is turnout has been good so far, but will keep doing outreach and looking for new channels.

(01:12) Joe asks about getting a "Sense of the Meeting Vote" and or a "Sense of the Community Vote" on the Ballot.

(01:13) Curtis is concerned that "Sense of the Meeting Vote" would bring controversy and tension. Suggests creating a statement and presentation about where we are, and putting that on the ballot.

(01:14) Joe reminds group as a *Citizen's Article*, all work would need to be completed by November, which Committee does not think is feasible.

(01:15) Tom says Select Board could sponsor a non-binding "Sense of the Community Vote".

(01:18) Jill and Tom think the Committee should utilize both "Sense of the Meeting Vote" and "Sense of the Community Vote".

(01:19) What order could the "Sense of the Meeting" vote be introduced? Could it go first?

(01:27) Adjourned